

STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOHN McCAIN
SENATE COMMITTEE ON
COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION
FULL COMMITTEE HEARING
ON DONALD EVANS' NOMINATION TO BE SECRETARY OF COMMERCE
JANUARY 4, 2001

C Mr. Chairman, thank you for convening this hearing. Welcome and congratulations to Mr. Evans and his family.

- In his acceptance remarks following the President's nomination, Mr. Evans laid out his vision and priorities for the Commerce Department. They include the promotion of free enterprise, first in America and then abroad, the free-flow of capital, and free and open competition. We look forward to hearing about Mr. Evans' plans in more detail today.

C At the outset, however, I want to applaud what I take to be Mr. Evans' emphasis on free and fair trade. I am a firm believer in free and open competition across international borders. We live in a global economy. The rapid rise of the Internet is just one of the more recent factors that makes the global economy an undeniable reality.

- Erecting and enforcing trade barriers between and among individual countries is simply the wrong policy to pursue. Free trade benefits its consumer beneficiaries. Established procedures, rather than retaliatory trade actions, are available to ensure trade is fair.
- Turning to the Department's responsibility for the census, we all know that the issue of statistical sampling is controversial, and has been deemed unconstitutional strictly for census counting purposes. I support a constitutional census plan that accurately counts every person.
- This issue is important to me because traditional counting methods do not provide an accurate count of the population in my home state of Arizona, and Arizona's citizens have suffered as a result. I look forward to Mr. Evans' comments on his plans to ensure an accurate census count, especially in those locations where there have been documented undercounts in the past.

C I should also mention another issue I raised with Mr. Evans in private. I believe that one of the most important missions of the Commerce Department is to remain politically neutral. Commerce Secretaries Daley and Mineta made great strides in reducing the political emphasis at the Department. Mr. Evans, I hope and expect that you will strive to continue and improve upon their efforts.

- In the past, the reputation of the Commerce Department has suffered. Charges include allegations that seats on foreign trade missions were “sold” to major donors, and that Commerce Department officials were directly involved in political fundraising. Mr. Evans, your vigilance will be essential to ensure that the Department remains true to its publicly stated mission, rather than an agenda that merely promotes political interests.
- Again, congratulations on your nomination, Mr. Evans. Your business experience speaks for itself as you face the challenging management task ahead of you. Thank you for your appearance today, and your willingness to serve.